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of Africa, the verdict is similarly adverse and is furthermore embittered by the moral condemnation of the author. When shown in this light, the foreign policy of the civilized nations assumes an aspect of heartlessness and brutality.

At no time is the historian on more precarious ground than when he attempts to depict the human motives which lie behind the events of history. The author's difficult task, that of tracing to a single motive the complex foreign policies of many states through an extended period of time, is especially open to the risk of bias. Mr. Woolf acknowledges this risk at different points in his book and frankly confesses the improbability of his succeeding in escaping it. His book leaves the reader with the impression that he has not wholly succeeded. To attribute the policies of the various chancellories solely, or even chiefly, to the pressure of profit-seeking capitalists leaves out of account the many non-economic forces which national pride and patriotism bring to play upon the relationships of states. This criticism applies, however, only to the author's attempted explanation of motive. His record of fact gives evidence of careful verification, and his summary of results is convincingly stated. Even those readers who cannot agree that a single motive actuates the modern state in its imperial policy will find this study of the progress of empire in Africa illuminating and suggestive.

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Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century. By ALICE CLARK. (London: George Routledge and Sons. 1919. Pp. 335.)

The research student grows fond of the period of his discoveries. He is charmed by its quaintness and he loves it for its picturesqueness as he compares it with the starkly familiar arrangements of his modern world. It becomes difficult to resist invidious comparisons in favor of the mosaic he has created from fragments of life found in old records.

Perhaps Miss Clark has succumbed to this subtle temptation and views the seventeenth century in the rosy light so easily invoked over the good old days of bygone times. For her the present shadow which sets off the golden glow of her period is "the blind force Capitalism." It is capitalism which has robbed women of their larger economic and social functions. In concluding, she

asks us to consider whether "the instability, superficiality and spiritual poverty of modern life, do not spring from an organization of a State which regards the purposes of life solely from the male standpoint." "The earlier English Commonwealth did actually embrace both men and women in its idea of the 'Whole' because it was composed of self-contained families." Now the state regards "the individual, not the family, as its unit, and in England this State began with the conception that it was concerned only with male individuals. Thus it came to pass that every womanly function was considered as the private interest of husbands and fathers."

These concluding remarks raise the questions: first, has Miss Clark proved the case that women had a fuller and more responsible share in production in the seventeenth century than is permitted them in the twentieth, and have we, in fact, greater superficiality and spiritual poverty to account for—questions which the reader may not readily answer in the affirmative.

Miss Clark states that her purpose is "to discover how far the extent of women's productive capacity and the conditions under which it was exercised affected their maternal functions and reacted upon their social influence both within and beyond the limits of the family" (p. 3). One wonders whether the author's real interest is not in sociological and psychological phenomena *per se* rather than in their economic explanations. At one point she nearly throws the whole economic interpretation overboard in favor of an almost mystical suggestion: "These far-reaching changes coincided with the triumph of capitalistic organization but they may not have been a necessary consequence of that triumph. They may have risen from some deep-lying cause, some tendency in human evolution which was merely hastened by the economic cataclysm" (p. 13).

It is claimed that capitalism has reversed the parts played by married and unmarried women in productive enterprise; that what we now call domestic work, such as cooking, cleaning, mending, and the care of children, was before the advent of Capitalism performed by young girls under the direction of the housewife, while under modern conditions, this domestic work falls upon the mothers. Yet the reader is not likely to forget that unmarried women do now go out to do domestic work in enormous numbers and that a very considerable number of married women engage in industry today.

The work of women is considered in five chapters entitled: Capitalists, Agriculture, Textiles, Crafts and Trades, and Professions.

Women of the aristocracy and *nouveau riche* (capitalists) were usually concerned with household affairs, and with estate management and business in the absence of their husbands. Numerous private letters and other records in which these activities are set forth are quoted. They deal almost exclusively with married women and widows. The author assumes that "the effect of such work on the development of women's characters was very great" but brings to light no evidence to show what the effect was. "The effect in social relations was also marked *for their work implied an association of men and women.*"¹

The duties of a prosperous farmer's wife as quoted at length from Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandrie* of a hundred years earlier "probably remained true of the seventeenth century." The dairy, poultry, garden, and orchard were the domain of the mistress. "Her duty was to organize and train her servants, both men and women." The wife of the husbandman who could not subsist entirely on his holdings and of the worker in the lowest agricultural class who depended entirely upon his earnings (having no land of his own) each led lives of little comfort. The wages of the agricultural laborer are stated with great definiteness to have averaged 3s. 2d. per week (p. 67). The reader is given no basis for the statement that: "Except in exceptional circumstances his wife's earnings would not amount to more than 1s. a week and her meat and drink" (p. 68). Bad housing, bad feeding, and small families resulted from insufficient incomes. The women were semi-starved and "their productive powers and capacity for motherhood were greatly reduced."

The predominance of women in the textile industry and the capitalistic organization of the woolen trade in the seventeenth century make it an important field in which to observe the effect of capitalism on women's economic position. In spite of the fact that the demand for women's labor exceeded the supply, the wages paid to women for spinning wool were barely sufficient for their individual subsistence, and for spinning linen they were insufficient. The low wages are explained by disorganization and the lack of bargaining power.

In the earlier days weaving had been to some extent a trade for

¹ Reviewer's italics.

women, but they were later excluded on the ground that their strength was not sufficient for the heavy looms. There is nothing to indicate that women had any considerable part in the management of the large and profitable undertakings of the clothiers and wool-merchants.

Girls were not apprenticed to the specialized and skilled trades of the guilds, but marriage to a guild member conferred upon them the rights and privileges of the husbands and a widow might continue the business. Miss Clark finds that her general contention that, as capitalistic organization developed, opportunities were more and more denied to women, applies particularly to work in the skilled and semi-skilled trades, but the evidence is not analyzed to show this.

Retail selling offered more scope for women, though this was also to some extent restricted by the rules of the companies and corporations and the requirement of an apprenticeship.

The position of women in certain of the professions was less favorable at the end of the seventeenth century than at the beginning. Arms, the Church, and the Law were entirely closed to them throughout the period, but whereas the activities of the farming people and artisans had been regulated by customs, depending for interpretation on public opinion in which both men and women had a part, during the seventeenth century many of these customs were abrogated "in favor of common law."

Nursing was poorly paid and held in little esteem. The hospitals gave nurses practically no training. A less and less significant rôle in all the arts of healing was permitted to women. Miss Clark sees in women a "natural affinity for the care of suffering humanity" and holds that "the psychic and emotional female development appears to make women more fitted than men to deal with preventive and remedial medicine."

Midwifery, "the most important public function exercised by women," was on a different footing and frequently brought a good revenue. During the seventeenth century, however, the monopoly which had always belonged to women in this profession passed "definitely under the control of men."

Throughout the study the contrasts which are suggested in the general statements do not appear to belong peculiarly to the seventeenth century. For the most part they might be applied as accurately to the greater part of the eighteenth century, or to earlier periods, when these periods are compared with the present

industrial era. Indeed it is frequently difficult for the reader to distinguish the characteristics of the seventeenth century from those of the sixteenth and eighteenth, from which illustrative data are repeatedly drawn.

The author frequently starts out with a sociological dictum such as that which asserts the great influence of environment upon the sex life of women, which she believes to be susceptible of extreme modification: "While in extreme cases the sexual impulses are liable to perversion, it sometimes happens that the maternal instinct disappears altogether, and women neglect or, like a tigress in captivity even destroy their young"!! (p. 1). Few of these dicta are followed by the exhibit of actual changes occurring in the seventeenth century.

The data are concerned almost exclusively with married women, and the reader's curiosity with regard to the unmarried is not quenched by the remarkable statement that "practically all adult women were married" (p. 196).

The authorities cited comprise 12 pages of carefully listed sources, including private letters and journals of contemporaries, biographies and travels, court cases, local histories, town and parish archives, guild and corporation records, and miscellaneous tracts and pamphlets in large numbers.

In spite of the fact that the author's powers of induction are not at all points comparable with her industry, the painstaking work is a monument to her effort, and is of unquestioned value in its presentation of contemporary evidence.

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Un Impôt Extraordinaire sur le Revenu sous la Révolution. Histoire de la Contribution Patriotique dans le Bas-Languedoc (Département d'Hérault) 1789-1795, d'après des Documents Inédits. By PIERRE-EDM. HUGUES. (Paris: Edouard Champion. 1919. Pp. lxxvii, 330.)

Bankruptcy forced the king of France in 1789 to summon the States General. At the advice of Neckar the Assembly passed a measure which the king accepted, imposing a "voluntary contribution" on the French nation. All citizens having an income of over 400 livres were to give to the state one quarter of their net income, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the value of their plate, jewelry, and coin. The tax was to be levied only once and all money re-